

ESCAPE BY STRATEGY

"DUMMY"

An internment camp for officers, located away down east, is credited with the most bizarre escape stunt on record. It happened one April evening, three years ago, and eye-witnesses—now in Medicine Hat—tell us the story.

The camp held 600 officers and 140 batmen. The roll-call showed all present and correct; nevertheless, two P.O.W.—both with escape records—were absent from the count and had been absent for several days before the trick was discovered. How could this be?

IN THE GLOAMING

The count was held at 2130 hrs and the April twilight was not exactly brilliant, while the few electric lights in use did little to help illuminate the roll-call parade. The camp's inmates lined up in rows of five.

On this evening a visiting officer was present for instructional purposes, and as he was



viewing the proceedings he observed that one of the prisoners had a sickly appearance and he commented on this to the Guard Officer.

The latter was at once suspicious but gave no sign that he had been tipped off. Instead he whispered a warning to his men and at the right moment the guards rushed in around the suspected group and succeeded in capturing the "sickly" prisoner intact. A few rows farther away, there was another "sickly" P.O.W. but the latter was thrown down by his companions and trampled into the ground, so that hardly any of him remained for the guards to rescue.

COUPLE OF STAND-INS

It was now clear that for at least two or three different "counts" the places of two escaped prisoners had been taken by two dummies. These had been introduced to the parade successfully in the general con-

(Continued on page 2)

"SNOWBALL"

It was 1940 hrs on Dec. 8th, 1942, when the alarm sounded at an officers' PW Camp in Eastern Canada. The weather was foul. For ten days blizzards had been blowing and the snow had been driven into huge drifts almost obliterating the wire fences in some places.

Conditions in the camp were not healthy. For two months handcuffing operations had been in effect and a battle of wits had been waged, the PW doing all they could to manoeuvre us into breaking the terms of the Geneva Convention. The sounding of the alarm might mean anything. As it turned out, it meant an escape.

From a tower set back from the enclosure, the sentry spotted what he thought was a slight movement in the white of the snow. Two pairs of eyes watched for a couple of minutes until the third sentry, who had gone out to investigate, arrived on the scene.

ESCAPE IN WHITE

Imagine the satisfaction of the sentry when he saw two figures robed in white from head to toe, get up from the spot they were watching, with their arms raised as thousands of others raised their arms in surrender.

The two escapees were thus recaptured within a few feet of the wire—but tracks in the snow indicated that others had made a getaway. It was a stroke of bad luck that the sentry had spotted the last, instead of the first two. Following up the tracks, the searchers traced the other escapees as far as the road, where their tracks were lost, and so the hunt began.

In the meantime, the whole camp was roused and the PW paraded for identification. It did not take long to discover that seven well known escapees were absent and all other PW

were accounted for.

RECAPTURE

An all night search took place. The wildest messages came in and many clues were followed up without result, until at 0200 hrs when a welcome message was received from the provincial police at B—that two of the escapees had been recaptured. As luck would have it, a heavy railway snow plough was just moving off as the escapees arrived at the station and they managed to get aboard.

At 0330 a third escapee was picked up and at 0900 hrs. two more arrived under escort, and at 1230 the sixth recapture was completed.

And so, six of the seven were safely back in the cells after 17 hours of liberty—if they cared to call it liberty.

The escape was made under the diversion of an exciting snow ball fight in the enclosure. While the snow fighting was on, the escapees, all covered with white sheets and pillow slips, crawled through a trench in the snow and then burrowed under deep snow to the wire where they cut neat holes through both wires and burrowed under snow for several feet from the outer wire. Later, when sheets and pillows were issued to them, and they discovered they had been dyed red, the remark was "How pretty."

The process of re-capture does not always resemble the gentle treatment that a nurse gives to a small child, and unless PW are quick to obey orders they are apt to come into violent contact with the butt of a rifle or a clenched fist. This is more than ever likely when they are some 20 miles away from the camp, and dressed as hooligans and cannot be recognizer as dignified German officers.

FRUSTRATED

But what of the seventh? Where was he? For four months he was missing, until one spring

(Continued on page 4)



Dummy placed between Camp Commandant and R.S.M. after capture.

P.O.W. WOW

"The little paper with readers from Halifax to Victoria"

(Published every second week at Medicine Hat.)

EDITORIAL STAFF

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Sub-editors:

36 Coy. V.G.C. Cpl. B. R. Wright
Headquarters Lt. A. G. Bruyns
R.C.A.M.C. Cpl. L. G. Barrett

This, the sixth number of P.O.W. WOW, is both a Christmas and New Year number. So we may wish our readers both a "Happy Christmas" and Good Fortune in the Coming Year. The year's end is also usually the time for recalling the highlights of the year just closing and expressing pious hopes for the year a-borning. Perhaps, in view of our own so very recent birth we had better not attempt this. "Coming events cast their shadows before" and the shadows fall fast and thick upon us. This lusty infant, our P.O.W. WOW, whose cries were just beginning to reach beyond the cradle, will never grow up. His days are definitely numbered. His foster-parents may soon be scattered over two continents. The V.G.C.—old Vets—will soon start on their last assignment and we know they will carry it out with the same esprit de corps they have shown during the last five and a half years. May we be pardoned for paraphrasing Kipling:

Wiping the frost from me eyelids
To see that none of 'em runs
I walk in me old green gaiters
Along o' me squad of Huns
With a score of good Vets behind me

And there's never a man forgets
It's only the pick of the Army
That handles the dear little pets.

This is our sixth Christmas of service in this war, and for some of us it will be our sixth winter away from our home and families. That it will probably be our last, goes without saying. May it be hoped that our Government which is prepared to do so much for the young Vet, will not forget the sacrifices the old Vet has made. The V.G.C., which at one time numbered

STAND EASY!

Too, there's the Scot who used to give his children a penny if they would go to bed without eating supper. In the morning when they arose ravenously hungry he charged them a penny for breakfast. About three weeks before Christmas he always announced the death of Santa Claus, in order to allay expectations.

* * *

Don't know what made us think of that Scot. Perhaps it was the announcement that PW's this Christmas will be allowed to spend a few cents of their own money for extras. This is poor policy in one way. It puts the PW's on a fraternal basis with the average married man.

* * *

Some talks of Vets getting a trip to Europe again. About a year from now there will be another "Bring the Vets' Brides Back Association" and a "We Want to See Our New Grandmother Before She Passes On" Club for young soldiers.

* * *

Asked about joining the Permanent Army, one Vet who was in the Boer War, the Zulu Rebellion, the Great War and the World War, said he was thinking it over first as he wasn't sure yet whether military life suited him.

VAUDEVILLE REVIEWED

Bobby Jones Minstrels, an exclusively I.C. 132 organization, did their stuff in camp and then followed this with a performance downtown at the old Empress theatre. Over a hundred dollars were cleared for the Christmas Kiddies Fund. It was a good show from start to finish and the "bring back vaudeville" movement got a boost as a result. Here are the men who were responsible: Stan Menzies, Moe La Montagne, Wally Muzychka, Jack Tyson, Don Craig, Dave Mills, Sam Hill, Ole Olien and Ralph Burkholder.

15,000, is now reduced to 4,500. To those still serving, and to those who have returned to civil life, we wish all happiness in the coming year.

INSPECTION WITH COMMENT

The powerhouse was well constructed and the two diesel engines were the pride of the two engineers who looked after them with loving care. It stood on a solid concrete base and the large windows had steel bars to keep PW's from breaking in. The windows this morning were wide open as the heat of the engines and the sun on the roof made it very warm inside. Archie, who had done his bit in the last war and who had now joined up again to do what could for his country, wiped his greasy hands on a piece of waste, leaned on the window sill and gazed out on the parade ground.

Headquarters company was on parade, being inspected by the C.O. of the camp. Archie spat, smartly hitting a bucket at three paces and remarked to his mate: "Look at them out there playing soldier." The engines were humming and Matie did not hear. Archie looked back, raised his voice above the engines and repeated: "Look at them playing soldier. Them brass hats can waste more time than you can shake a stick at. They think all we have to do is stand around and look pretty for them, so they can stand around and act like blooming generals. General nuisance, I calls it." By this time Archie really got warmed up and his eloquence was only exceeded by his interest in the proceedings on the parade ground.

The sergeant-major had brought H.Q. Coy smartly to attention when the C.O. appeared. It looked like it would be a good parade this morning. All was very quiet and only the steady hum of the engines broke the silence. When the C.O. was half way through the front ranks a voice boomed across the valley: "Look at them playing soldier." The valley, like a megaphone, carried Archie's voice, unbeknown to him, and the parade was carried out under the handicap of a running commentary, uncensored and unabridged, by the voice from the powerhouse.

The Fourth Column

Editor, P.O.W. WOW:

A great deal of interest has been created as the paper is passed around, especially among the older V.G.C. personnel. The young troops are interested in the sports angle, and the evident esprit-de-corps that exists among "oldsters" and "youngsters."

Your article, "Ozada, the Tented City," was of especial interest to this Unit, as they were responsible for the safe delivery of a considerable number of the "guests" when the Camp was opened in 1942.

P.O.W. WOW is very informative and concise, and could very well have filled the long-felt need of a corps paper had the matter been given sufficient consideration at the proper time.

F.J.C., Major.

Gravenhurst, Ont.

"DUMMY"

(Continued from page 1)

fusion of rushing groups as the P.O.W. lined up for roll-call. They made a fair appearance as the illustrations bear witness. The heads had been shaped from papier-mache, that is, old newspapers had been moistened and compressed into solidity. A quantity of plaster of paris had been obtained (for theatrical use) from the commandant and this had been used to sculpture the face and features. Coloring did the rest, assisted by hair salvaged from the barber shop. The dummies were completely dressed as to uniform, underwear and boots.

It should be noted that a new regulation was introduced immediately, whereby the rows of fives were required to take several paces forward as the count of each row was made. This was to prevent any further use of the trick.

The escaped-prisoners were recaptured but at such a distance that it was clear that they had had several days of undetected freedom. One of them, S—, had a record of escaping four or five times. The other, K—, managed to escape again soon after his recapture.

Somewhere, probably in Ottawa, the dummy in its field grey uniform stands in all its Prussian rigidity, staring into space with that asutere stupidity, that complete ignorance of its surroundings and that unblemished composure that would certainly earn it steady promotion if it hadn't those unfortunate gaps in its Pulhems.

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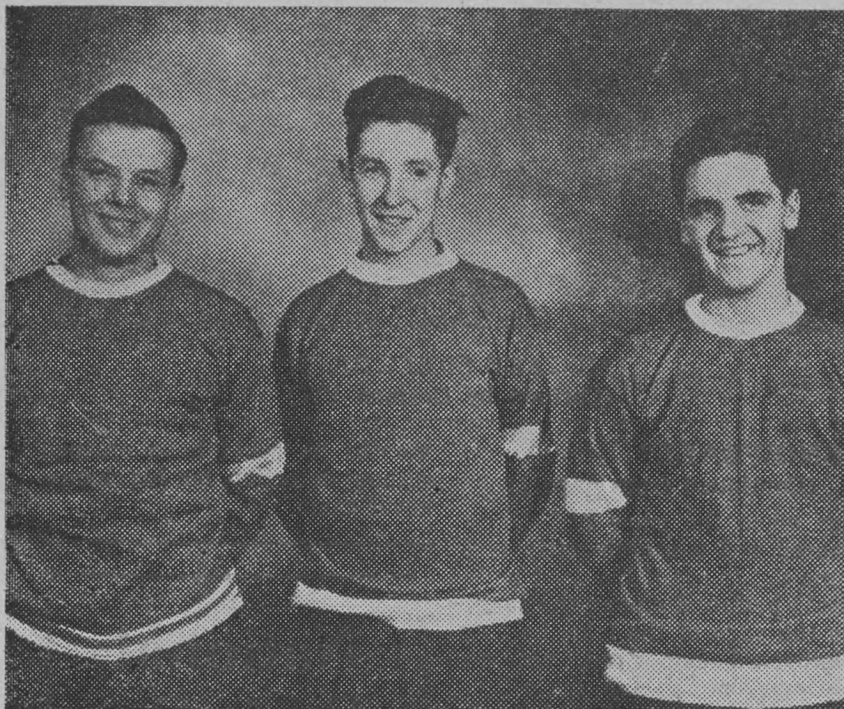
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TIGERS MAUL LIONS BADLY, 15-10

WEIGHT AND EXPERIENCE GIVE TIGERS VICTORY OVER LIONS IN FIRST GAME



Two players who were standouts against Tigers in the opening game—McCulloch and Rendall. The third man, Lane, at the right, was discharged.

Internment Camp Lions made their debut in the 1945-46 hockey season by taking the short end of a score that was more like fastball than hockey—15-10. Playing before 800 fans against the New Club Tigers in the Medicine Hat Arena on Thursday nite, POW Lions were quite ineffective until the second period got underway. This opening game of the Gas City Intermediate Hockey League proved to be a shower of rubber with both sides showing a good deal of ragged play with some bursts of good hockey.

TIGER'S EARLY LEAD

Lions provided some colour by coming out for their warm-up practise dressed in the familiar blue with red-circles regulation prisoner-of-war garb. Ten minutes after the first period had begun, the score read 5-0 for Tigers. They never relinquished their lead. Outclassed by fancy passing plays and by a preponderance of weight, Lions fought back gamely. From the second period on, Tigers brushed up on their passing plays—a delaying strategy that nearly cost them the game. During the third period the internment camp boys threatened twice with the score reading 8-7 and 10-9, but were never quite able to gain the lead. Experience and weight told; the final score was 15-10.

George Fisher and Jimmy McIndoe were standouts for Tigers, sharing nine goals, while Porter, McCulloch and Rendall led the Lions' attack. Porter in particular came up with some beautiful attacks that had Lions' supporters on their feet many times. This was not a game of championship calibre, but it was good wide-open hockey that held the interest of the fans throughout.

Summary of Game

First period—1, Tigers, G. Fisher (J. Fisher), 2:20; 2, Tigers, G. Smith (Hansen), 2:50; 3, Tigers, G. Fisher (McIndoe), 7:35; 4, Tigers, McIndoe, 10:10; 5, Tigers, McIndoe (G. Fisher), 18:00. Penalties—none.

Second period—6, Lions, Rendall, 3:00; 7, Lions, Rendall, 3:50; 8, Tigers, McIndoe, 5:25; 9, Tigers, J. Smith (Hansen), 8:10; 10, Lions, McCulloch, 12:35; 11, Tigers, McIndoe (Gibson), 19:00. Penalties—McIndoe, Gibson.

Third period—12, Lions, Buchanan (Pearce), 1:10; 13, Lions, Porter (Johnstone), 3:50; 14, Lions, McCulloch, 5:50; 15, Lions, Trubyk (Menzies), 6:50; 16, Tigers, J. Smith (G. Smith), 7:00; 17, Tigers, J. Smith, 7:50; 18, Lions, Porter, 9:10; 19, Lions, Pearce, 10:40; 20, Tigers, G. Fisher, 10:55; 21, Lions, Porter, 11:25; 22, Tigers, McIndoe (G. Smith), 14:05; 23, Tigers, Mc-

LEGION DOWN TIGERS 7-3

Spectacular playing on the part of Moose Bannan, Legionaires goalie; beautiful rushes organized by Joe Fisher on Tiger defense, and a slug-fest starring this same Fisher and Naismith—these were some of the thrills offered last Saturday night when Tigers met Legionaires in the second game of the Gas City Hockey League at the Arena. Unfortunately only a few soldiers from the Internment Camp were there to witness this game. They missed a good game.

It looked like Tigers in the first period when goals by Fisher and MacDonald gave them a 2-0 lead when the gong sounded after 20 minutes. Gaining force gradually, Legionaires came into their own to invert the lead to 4-3 at the 40-minute mark. Tigers tired and Legionaires swept ahead to win handily by a 7-3 score.

Indoe (G. Fisher), 14:30; 24, Tigers, J. Fisher (G. Fisher), 15:20; 25, Tigers, J. Smith (G. Smith), 19:35. Penalties—J. Smith, Menzies, Terry MacDonald, Trubyk.

Timekeeper—G. Pauling.

GAS CITY LEAGUE

	W	L	D	F	A	Pt
Tigers	1	1	0	18	17	2
Legionaires	1	0	0	7	3	2
I.C. Lions	0	1	0	10	15	0
Suffield	0	0	0	0	0	0

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HALF-TIME With Archie

What a game! Army beat Navy 32-13, then Tigers chewed up Lions 15-10. No, they weren't both football games; the last was a hockey game that happened right here in Medicine Hat last Thursday. Archie lost track of the score after the first dozen—just as the referee lost six pucks down the drain. All in all, an interesting game that kept the Army side of the Arena on its feet every time POW's scored. . . . Met an old friend at the game. His comment: "You have some real hockey talent on your team and some of the lads played standout hockey, Porter, McCulloch, Rendall, Johnson and Hemstock, to name a few. With more practise they will be a factor in the league to be feared by all teams. You have the right kind of spirit. Most teams would have given up the game as a lost cause. You can be proud of your fighting team spirit." A nice bouquet from a man who hung around the Montreal Forum so long that he began to chew his gum like Nels Stewart, a hockey great of a decade ago. At present with UNRRA, this friend coached Montreal Army in 1944. Jean Pusie, the wicked old fire-brand, Jimmy Peters now with Canadians, and MacDonald of Rangers, were some of the boys playing with Army that year. . . . Looks like the hockey team will lay off now until after Christmas. . . . Lethbridge Army and Suffield are angling for a game. The Suffield game ought to be a natural in view of the rivalry already existing in basketball. . . . Who knows what kind of team we'll have when the New Year rolls around? Just looking at the program given at the hockey game the other night, out of the 16 players listed only nine played. Our next game may see only one or two of those nine left. But that's Army for you. . . . Anyhow, be secin' you after Christmas.

NOTE TO READERS

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Ozada, The Tented City

Third in a Series of Stories on Internment Camps

Winter came early to the tented city in the mountains. The almost daily thunderstorms that occurred in September were followed by cold storms and snow in October. One night, over 300 tents and marquees blew down. Fires, also, were almost daily occurrences, as kitchens and store tents were provided with stoves. One of the most difficult fires blazed among hundreds of bales of straw stacked near the oil and gasoline supply. A heavy snowstorm about 0200 hours finally put it out.

With the advent of frost and snow outdoors, ablutions and water supply became a problem. Shower baths were in marquees with hot water supplied by a threshing type steam engine. It required considerable fortitude to walk several hundred yards through the snow, undress in a tent that was only partly warmed by an oil drum stove and then step into the bathroom which wasn't warmed at all. Icicles hung from the roof and sides and the bath mats were covered with ice until the warm water thawed them out. Eventually the pipes froze up and bathing became impossible. Even the cooking water had to be brought around in tank trucks or barrels.

In November the temperature dropped to 20-25 degrees below zero, and the sentries in the towers were the lucky ones, for they had coal stoves. The old Vets in their condemned tents shivered, grouched and stuck it. Wood or coal stoves and stove piping were in very short supply in the fall and early winter of 1942. So the old Vets once again demonstrated their versatility. Those that had any experience in metal working or tinsmithing were rounded up and soon a tinsmiths shop was operating, turning oil drums into stoves as had been done in the war of 1914-18. Also a supply of marquees became available and a number of men were moved into marquees, equipped with a stove at one end. This was positive luxury even though a bucket of water inside the tent would freeze solid six feet from the stove.

The next thing was to get wood for the stoves. It was a full-time job to keep all the kitchens and messes supplied with fire wood, which was brought down in pole lengths from the Kanaska valley about 18 miles away, and then sawn into stove lengths by PW. There was no additional transportation available for hauling more, so the old Vets went

into the woods, cut and hauled their own supply, after they had finished guard and escort duties. When the odd truck was available they would use it, but often their loads had to be hauled by hand on home-made sleds. It was "chop wood or freeze" during October and November, 1942.

ESCAPE FOILED

The last week in November saw the PW starting to move to the new permanent camp at Lethbridge and by 6 December all but four had been transferred. These four German N.C.O.s had decided to escape and had dug an underground shelter in the side of a large sump pit in the enclosure. This hideout was well stocked with food, and despite diligent searching was not discovered until late in January.

In the meantime a small force of Vets had been left behind to watch for these PW who were known to be hiding in the enclosure, and one day new tracks were noted in the snow leading to their dugout. They were quickly winkled out and sent on to Lethbridge. But a score or more of old Vets spent their Christmas and New Year among the snow and bitter winds of Ozada watching day and night for the escapees. Their reward: merely the satisfaction of a job well done.

So our brief sketch of Ozada Camp comes to an end. For seven long months it was a battle with the elements and the cunning enemy. Those who were there will never forget it and possible some day the historian delving into Veterans' Guard war diaries will give the story the prominence it deserves. The 29 tall towers still stand around the wire of Ozada. The tents and marquees have gone, and the towering peaks of the Rockies look down on a city that has vanished. Many of the old Vets who served there have also gone to their last resting place. Perhaps on a wintry night when the wind is blowing a gale and the snow is swirling around the towers, the Stoney Indian searching for his cattle will hear a ghostly challenge: "Halt—Pass friend—All's well."

A soldier received a letter from a lawyer demanding payment of an account.

The soldier's reply was: "You go take a jump in the lake."

The lawyer's reply to above letter: "As there are several lakes in the vicinity and you do not specify which, I have not yet complied with your request."



MISTAKE SOMEWHERE!
(Cartoon by German PW)

"SNOWBALL"

(Continued from page 1)

day when the snow had disappeared and a search party had gone out to see if his dead body could be found among the rocks on the edge of the lake, he was discovered—not dead, not an escapee—but in the enclosure, where he had been in hiding all the time, and where he had foolishly had an operation performed on him, adding about an inch to his chin, disfiguring him for life.

For four months—be it said to the security of the Camp—he had waited in vain for an opportunity to escape. For four months he was written off the roll call parades, and for four

months he could have escaped without detection, but his chance never came.

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